GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3570
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2001
RATE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
ALE NARENDRA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rate of agricultural production is different in various regions of the country;

(b) if so, whether in view of different rate of agricultural production, the Government have categorized the agriculture land; and

(c) if so, the details of categories under which agriculture land has been divided and the criteria of such categorization?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) to (c) : Yes, Sir. The Planning Commission, under agro-climatic Regional PlanningProject, has divided the country into 15 regions on the basis of commonality of factors such as soil type, rainfall, temperatures, water resources etc. The demarcation of these agro climatic regions assume importance in planning strategies for agricultural development. The details of important agro-climatic regions are given in the annexure.

Annexure

Important Agro - Climatic Regions of India.

Western Himalaya Region

The hill regions of Western Himalayas, spanning across Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in the north of India, have much diversity. The valleys receive good rainfall and have rich soils though the temperate zones of Ladakh face climatic barriers against agricultural growth. High soil erosion also reduces fertility.

Eastern Himalaya Region

This zone includes Sikkim, parts of north West Bengal and the entire North Easternregion. The hill areas are sparsely populated with a mix of several ethnic origins and culture. The climate varies from tropical in the plains to Alpine in the high hills. Nearly a third of the cultivations is of the shifting (jhum) type.

Lower Gangetic Plains Region

This zone includes 12 districts of West Bengal. Major tributaries of the Ganga flowthrough this zone which is also in the high rainfall area with an annual rainfall ranging between 1200 mm and 1700 mm. Silt deposition has increased the frequency of floods in this zone. Flooding of vast areas during the end of September or October and droughtspells during November-June have become a normal feature, rendering crop cultivation very risky.

Middle Gangetic Plains Region

Twelve districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and 27 districts of Bihar Plains form themiddle segment of the Gangetic plains. The zone is endowed with rich land and water resources. The weather oscillates from the extreme limits of summer to winter with heavy downpours. Many crops can be grown throughout the year. Here Land, water and climatic factors are such that highest productivity could be realised provided planning exercises are carefully organised and action plans are implemented.

Upper Gangetic Plains Region

This is among the larger and very thickly populated agro-climatic zones. It covers 32 districts. A large part of the geographical area is cultivated and is well irrigated. Over 70 per cent of the area is sown and nearly 68 per cent of this is irrigated. The ratio of surface to ground irrigation is about 1:2. Agricultural labour and land productivity is high.

The zone is characterized by semi-desert, semi-arid and sub-humid conditions. The mean annual rainfall varies between 700 and

1000 mm.

Trans-Gangetic Plains Region

This zone encompasses the states of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, Chandigarh anddistrict Ganganagar of Rajasthan. The sub-zones cut across state boundaries. The climate is arid, semi-arid and sub-humid in different districts. In summer months temperatures rise up to 430 C radiating heat waves with occasional dust storms. Rainfall varies from 190 mm to 1150 mm. The rivers of Beas, Ravi, Sutlej, Yamuna and Ghaggar are important sources for irrigation in the zone.

Eastern Plateau & Hills Region

This is the largest agro-climatic zone covering about 400 thousand square kilometers of geographical area. It spans across parts of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal and is divided into five sub-zones. The population is largely rural with a concentration of tribals. The average annual rainfall is about 1350 mm. Shifting cultivation has been the traditional pattern of farming in this zone.

Agricultural productivity is quite low. Over a quarter of the region is covered by forests. In parts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra falling under this zone, nearly half of the geographical area is covered by forest.

Central Plateau & Hills Region

This zone includes 46 districts from three states and is centrally located. It is interspersed with plateau and hill areas. There are vast areas of barren and uncultivatable land. Water run-off is excessive. Nearly 15 per cent of the land is not available for cultivation.

Western Plateau & Hills Region

This zone comprises a major part of the state of Maharashtra, parts of MadhyaPradesh and one district from Rajasthan. It is known for its oranges, grapes and bananas. Besides, it also accounts for around half of the jowar production in the country.

Southern Plateau and Hills Region

This zone, comprising 35 districts of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka andTamil Nadu, is typically semi-arid with 74 percent of dry land farming. Only about half the area is cultivated and the cropping intensity is low at about 112 percent. Underdeveloped irrigation has led to unstable and low agricultural productivity.

East Coast Plains and Hills Region

This zone covers parts of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherryalong the coast line facing Bay of Bengal. The annual rainfall ranges between 780 mm and 1300 mm. The region has got preponderance of paddy cultivation due to alluvial soil in the delta regions of east flowing peninsula rivers.

Western Plains and Ghat Region

This is an important zone for plantation crops and spices. It runs along the west cost covering parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa with a variety of soil types and rainfall patterns.

Gujarat Plains and Hills Region

This zone covers the entire state of Gujarat. It can be broadly divided into south, Middle, North and Saurashtra - Kutch regions.Large parts of the state are plains, mountainous parts lie on the eastern border with states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradeshand Rajasthan. Nearly 20 per cent of the area is considered drought prone. The southern parts of the state have a good canal network.

Western Dry Region

This zone includes nine districts of Rajasthan viz., Barmer, Bikaner, Churu, Jaisalmer, Jalor, Jhunjhunun, Jodhpur, Nagaur and Sikar. The zone has all the characteristics of a hot desert. Rains are scanty and erratic, rate of evaporation is high, there are no perennial rivers, ground water table is very deep and is often brackish. Vegetation is sparse.

The average rainfall is about 400 mm but with very high year to year variations. The average temperature varies from about 450 C in May − June to less than 20C in December − January. High wind velocity, scorching heat and sand storms are common features during summer months.

The soil is mostly sandy, loamy sand and sandy loam. About 28 per cent of the land is tilled; 11 per cent of the cultivated area is irrigated. Productivity is among the lowest in the country.